Remarks by
The Honorable Daniel S. Goldin
Feb. 1, 1999

Good afternoon.

For the past seven years, I have had the honor of standing before you to present the proposed NASA budget.

And as the years have passed by, the record of accomplishments grows and the promise of the future gets brighter.

And this year is no exception. NASA keeps getting better and better.

We are thinking "out of the box," looking at technologies like air breathing rockets and ultra-high temperature materials to cut launch costs by two orders of magnitude.

We are examining gossamer spacecraft, revolutionary aircraft, intelligent robots and antimatter propulsion for exploration within our solar system and into interstellar space.

For the sixth year in a row, NASA's budget has declined while productivity improves.

Doing more with less money and fewer people is consistent with the President's vision of a federal government that works better and costs less.

And the NASA team continues to deliver….probing deeper and deeper into the universe….launching shuttle after shuttle safely….increasing our understanding of planet Earth…testing and developing new technologies for the new millennium…. pushing the envelope of space-based medical research.

Today…as we stand at the threshold of one of our busiest launch years ever….

I'd like to roll for you a short tape highlighting the accomplishments of last year and looking ahead to an exciting future….

This is as much information for you as it is a tribute to our people.

(SHOW VIDEO)

As you can see by the tape, we're not talking about everyday, ordinary accomplishments.

We – NASA and our International Partners -- are building an entire research center – as big as the U.S. Capitol – and we are building it in space, on orbit.

We are sending a spacecraft to a moon a half billion miles from here, to Europa, to resolve the tantalizing potential of an ocean existing under its icy surface.

After we get the results from this mission, we may want to put a submarine into that ocean to answer the fundamental question of the existence of life.

Almost a hundred years ago, the Wright Brothers flew above the sands of Kitty Hawk. Now, we are planning a "micromission" to fly an airplane above the sands of Mars.

There is a revolution going on in information sciences and technology. NASA plays a key role in many ways. I am excited about the great leaps we can make using information technologies to carry out our missions.

We can make engineers and scientists even more productive, able to design airplanes and spacecraft in less time, and at less cost. We can interpret and integrate the enormous quantities of Space and Earth Sciences information our spacecraft are collecting.

And, most importantly, we can employ these tools to communicate our discoveries around the globe.

Whether it's Triana viewing the Earth from an Earth-Sun libration point, Hubble images of far-off galaxies or information flowing from a network of Mars exploration sites, we will continue to make available an amazing array of information over the Internet.

Many of you heard earlier today about the Administration's Information Technology Initiative for the Twenty-first Century. At NASA, we're proud to be a part of the team that over the past years has brought about this revolution.

Now, what does this budget mean for NASA? Overall, "***Good news***."

I can say that even though our budget request for FY 2000 will be slightly below this year's funding level.

We have more money for space science, for exciting new missions and for the research and advanced technologies that will enable bold, new ventures in the future.

The Europa, Mars micromissions and Mars Network are among these.

No other nation in history has experienced such a surge in exploration. Europa, Mars, Jupiter, Saturn, asteroids, comets….We couldn't afford such an ambitious agenda if the new missions cost what Galileo and Cassini cost. With the investment in new technologies, we can.

We have the necessary resources to meet the current challenges of Space Station.

Last year, we made a strategic decision to assist our Russian partners in the near-term to facilitate their completion of essential Station components, such as the Service Module.

We also decided to move forward to mitigate adverse impacts on the Station's operations if they can't meet their commitments for supplying propellant and dry goods.

We covered the FY 1998 and FY 1999 impacts, and asked the Administration for assistance in covering FY 2000 and future year costs.

And, they have done so, after determining that we had made appropriate internal reductions in the human space flight, and that we had reduced other NASA programs with lower priority.

We have not targeted reductions in the shuttle program because we have already taken steps to make it safer and more efficient.

The shuttle is safer than ever before, and because of our continuous improvement programs and shuttle upgrades it costs the American taxpayer 21 percent less than it did in 1991…40 percent if you factor in inflation.

We have a slight increase in funding for Earth Science. In 1999, we will launch three extremely important satellites…. the Earth Observing spacecraft Terra, Landsat-7, and Quickscat…these spacecraft will join the constellation of capability that NASA is assembling in low-Earth orbit.

The Shuttle will be used for a cooperative NASA/DOD Radar Topography Mapping Mission late this year.

Revoluntionary technologies for land remote sensing will be demonstrated this year when we launch the first Earth Observer, carrying the Advanced Land Imager and the Hyperion hyperspectral imager.

When we look to the future of aerospace technology, this Administration is prepared to invest significant dollars.

Over the past five years we have spent $1.3 billion on Advanced Space Transportation technology. Over the next five years, the President's budget provides for $2.2 billion. This is a significant increase that demonstrates this Administration's commitment.

The 2000 funding levels are significantly lower for Aeronautics and Space Transportation Technology.

In the latter case, this dip is pre-planned, and is due to the tail-off in development funding for the X-33. In Aeronautics, we had planned a slight reduction, but wound up with a much larger reduction.

The High Speed Research program and Advanced Subsonic Technology programs have been discontinued.

In the case of HSR, the decision was made when our key industry partner for the airframe decided to withdraw. In Advanced Subsonics, we made some priority decisions to get out of some technology areas and emphasize others.

We feel so strongly about safety that we have increased technology investment by adding an initiative called "synthetic vision."

And, we'll be moving into new areas, exploring revolutionary concepts in flight research.

We are working on hypersonic vehicles where there will no longer be a distinction between aeronautics vehicles, that is, air breathing and space transportation vehicles, propelled by rocket engines.

One point of key significance to the NASA centers involved: we will not make **any** reductions in the civil service workforce at our aeronautics centers. We are committed to maintaining the crucial technical skills in our civil service workforce to assure that our nation has the ability to continue to lead the way in aeronautics.

We intend to strengthen NASA's Aeronautics program with the assistance and support of Congress.

Many of you know how relentless I am in pushing Safety as an overarching priority that must permeate all NASA activities, whether on the ground, in the air or in space. The decisions made in formulating the NASA FY 2000 budget were constantly tested against the standard of uncompromising adherence to Safety.

In the last four years, we have exceeded our goals to reduce lost time due to illness or injury in the workplace.

We are now embracing an even more aggressive program for the Space Shuttle, which will improve quality and result in even more improvements in safety.

There is no compromise for the safety and the health of our employees at NASA.

We have a special responsibility.  For the first time in history, we will be writing standards for safe operation of a workplace in space…a workplace that travels eight times the speed of a rifle bullet 200 miles above the planet.

In closing: thanks to the support of this Administration, of Congress and the hard work of our talented employees, we have a budget that gives us the opportunity to develop the technology for the future.

Because NASA doesn't think small….because we plan for the long term, not the short term….this budget is not designed for the next decade. It is designed for the next millennium.

And NASA will be leading the way.

Thank you, and now I'll take your questions.

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